United Nations S/PRST/2002/13

Security Council

Distr.: General
20 May 2002

Original: English

Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4537th meeting of the Security Council, held on 20 May 2002, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in East Timor", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the attainment of independence by East Timor on 20 May 2002, which marks the culmination of a process of self-determination and transition that began in May 1999. The Council pays tribute to the people and leadership of East Timor for their efforts in achieving the goal of independence.

"The Security Council affirms its commitment to the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity and national unity of East Timor within its internationally recognized boundaries.

"The Security Council takes this opportunity to express its deep appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, and notes with satisfaction the role played by the United Nations in restoring peace to East Timor, and in building a solid foundation for a democratic, viable and stable East Timor. The Council commends the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) for the important work that it has done to achieve these important goals.

"The Security Council expresses its strong support for the leadership of East Timor as it assumes authority for governing the new, sovereign State of East Timor. The Council recognizes that the people and democratically elected Government of East Timor bear the ultimate responsibility for the establishment and maintenance of a viable State. It expresses its confidence that the people and leadership of East Timor will demonstrate the necessary political will and determination to fulfil their aspirations.

"The Security Council appreciates the efforts made by the General Assembly and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples towards East Timor's achievement of independence. The Council expresses its appreciation to the Government of Indonesia and the Government of Portugal for their cooperation with the United Nations in concluding the 5 May 1999 Agreement which led to the establishment of the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET) to

02-38994 (E) 200502

conduct the popular consultation. It also expresses its appreciation to Australia and all other countries that contributed troops to the International Force in East Timor (INTERFET) and the UNTAET, which helped restore stability following the post-referendum violence.

"The Security Council welcomes the Government of East Timor's commitment to develop close and strong relations with Indonesia, and the Government of Indonesia's stated readiness to cooperate with East Timor towards building a peaceful, unified and sustainable society in East Timor. The Council stresses that good relations with neighbouring States will be essential to East Timor's future stability and that of the region, which are inextricably linked.

"The Security Council is concerned that challenges to the security and stability of East Timor remain after independence. It notes with concern that shortcomings exist in a number of critical public administration elements of East Timor in the post-independence period. The Council reaffirms that a strong international commitment will be required in East Timor to ensure continued stability and development of the country for some time after independence. The Council expresses its confidence that the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) established through resolution 1410 (2002) on 17 May 2002 will help consolidate and strengthen a stable environment in East Timor.

"The Security Council reaffirms the importance of complementing the United Nations peacekeeping contribution with other United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, international financial institutions, bilateral donors and non-governmental organizations to assist the people of East Timor to develop a sustainable social system and economy. It also reaffirms the continued need for effective and close coordination among these programmes and donors to ensure a smooth transition towards a normal development assistance framework. The Council appeals to Member States to respond positively to the urgent appeal of the Secretary-General to fill vacancies in the Civilian Support Group. It also urges Member States and other actors to respond positively to the appeals for assistance in the development of the East Timor defence force, police service and justice sector; and in supporting social and economic development and poverty reduction.

"The Security Council looks forward to the day in the near future when East Timor will join us as a Member of the United Nations and to working closely with its representatives. The Council notes that the East Timor Government today submitted a letter to the Secretary-General requesting the admission of East Timor as a Member of the United Nations.

"The Security Council will remain actively seized of the matter."